4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

A horrible belief prevails among the Ghegs that when men or women live to be a hundred years old their breath becomes poisonous and kills healthy people. Von Hahn says that old people suspected of causing sickness in this way, especially when an epidemic is raging, have atoned for their longevity with a fiery death at the hands of their panic-stricken neighbours.[1]

A curious notion is also shared by Greeks and Albanians that shadows are capable of assuming an independent existence, and, being malevolently disposed, are able to deal men blows which usually cause their death.

The Dif, or Dev (δίφι, δίβι, δεφ, δίβι), is, like the Kūrdish supernal of the latter name,[2] a being possessed of extraordinary physical strength. "He is a regular Dif" is said of a remarkably strong man, as we say, "He is another Samson." According to the people of Elbassan, the Dif is an enormous giant who lives underground and never comes to the surface, and whose business it is to keep the cauldrons boiling which supply the hot and medicinal springs in the neighbourhood of that town. These springs, in common with those found in other parts of the country, are much resorted to for curative purposes. Their waters are, however, drunk indiscriminately for all kinds of ailments, without regard to their various medicinal properties. The cures effected not being attributed to the water itself so much as to the influence of the magical beings who have their abodes in the springs and wells, people consequently go

[1] *Albanesische Studien*, p. 163.

[2] See p. 155. Von Hahn suggests an Indian origin for this word, which, he says, he had found in no other part of Turkey. *Op. cit.* p. 162.

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color. Most of them were sitting on low stools, 592
embroidering or working opangi, and the white-garbed men lounged at their feet, closer to the fire, resting on elbows and smoking.

There was the delicate negotiation about the 000
mule. The byraktor owned one, but he did not want to take it to Scutari. I left that to Rexh; the byraktor listened to him as courteously as though the boy had been twenty years older, and Rexh bargained with him as with an equal. A hundred kronen, Rexh said, tentatively, at last, but even at that terrific price the byraktor did not seem eager to make the trip (for, of course, he himself would go where his mule went) and Rexh thought best to drop the question for a while.

"Where do you come from?" one of the youths 823
asked me; and when I had replied, "In what direction from here is America?"

"California, the part of America from which I come," I answered—and did not very greatly stretch the truth—"is directly through the earth, on the other side."

Why they sat up in such excitement I did not know; I had expected surprise, but not such a volley of questions, not such a visible sensation. Rexh sat replying to them, earnestly explaining, making a gesture now and then; their eyes followed his hands, fascinated. His talk became a monologue; it went on and on; all work stopped, cigarettes burned to heedless fingers, the coffee bubbled unnoticed by the byraktor. Little Rexh,

* [Shoshi people at [253] warchief's house --Analyst]

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823 sitting erect in his pajama coat, the streaks of red dye now dried fantastically on his chubby face, held them all spellbound, while I begged him in vain to tell me what he was saying.

"It is nothing, Mrs. Lane," he answered me, at last. "I am telling them about the map. I am telling them that the map is not flat, as it looks, but round, like a ball."

He was telling them that the earth was round! And hearing my voice, they appealed to me in a bombardment of questions.

"Is the earth really round?"

"Yes."

"You have seen it? You know that it is round?"

"Yes."

"You have been around it, yourself?"

"Yes," I said, mendaciously.

They sat back and considered this. Then they asked particulars. They could understand that the earth was curved, for they had seen that the mountains were not flat, so it would be possible for the earth to be curved. But were the seas curved also? Would water curve? I said that it would, that, indeed, it did.

Had I been upon the great spaces of water and seen that they were curved?

I had been upon the seas, I said, and they were curved. They did not look curved, because the earth was so large and the eye saw so little of it, but they were curved, for one could go quite around the earth on them.

PEAKS OF SHALA

They smoked over this for some time. The 823
byraktor rescued his coffee pot, in deep abstraction. I did not expect them to believe what I had said. How could they? It must have appeared to them the wildest of fairy tales (although in all Albania there are no fairies, and therefore —I suppose that is the reason—there are no Albanian fairy tales). Men suffered much at the hands of our ancestors for telling them the monstrous idea that the flat earth is round. I wished I knew what thoughts were taking shape behind those dark Albanian eyes.

Then the byraktor looked up. "If the solid earth is round," he said, "and if the water lies upon it in a curve, then this earth is moving very rapidly. For if the earth were standing still the water would fall off."

My astonishment was profound. I felt myself 000
a child beside that mind, and I thought that a man who could so wrestle with a new fact and evolve from it an even more amazing conclusion was no man for me to contend with in a little matter of hiring a mule and getting, somehow, to Scutari.

Presently large flocks of sheep and goats were 231
driven through the room, past the fire, and into 562
the darkness beyond the arched doorway. Rain-drenched shepherdesses, half clad in rags, followed them, and having, with much noise of tearing branches, given them their dried oak boughs to eat during the night, the shepherdesses returned and sat by the fire, addressing the byraktor in tones of accustomed equality.

[In house of Sheshi warchief [255] -- Analyst]